

Francoism, Censorship, and the Evolution of the Catalan Public Sphere, 1938-55

Undergraduate Research Thesis

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Introduction

In 1946, the United Nations was tasked with the job of rebuilding a world devastated by war. One of the initial questions faced by the new body was the role that Spain would play in a new Europe and, indeed, a new international order. General Francisco Franco had taken over Spain six years earlier with his victory in the Spanish Civil War, thanks in large part to the assistance of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, and had ruled over an authoritarian regime that had grown increasingly internationally isolated ever since. Franco would hold onto rule in the country until his death in 1975, which ushered in the subsequent era of transition to the country's modern system of liberal democracy. As the UN considered what place Spain would be afforded in the post-World War II international community, they considered the reports of visitors to Spain on the nature of the Francoist state.¹ These reports detailed an oppressive political system and the UN ultimately decided to confirm previous international condemnations of the regime in recommending that member states end their diplomatic relations with Spain.²

At the core of the oppressive conditions described by the UN in 1946 was the censorship system of Francoist Spain. The censorship system imposed on the Spanish press was one of the hallmarks of the Francoist system from the very first years of Franco's government. First institutionalized in 1938 before the Spanish Civil War had even come to an end, the regime meant the system to be the primary communicator of ideas from the state to the civilian

¹ David Wingate Pike, "Franco et l'admission aux Nations unies," *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporaines* 162 (1991): 108-109.

² UN General Assembly, *Relations of Members of the United Nations with Spain*, 12 December 1946, A/RES/39, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f08d8.html> [accessed 13 September 2020].

population. This system, and its impact as a sociocultural tool, will be the primary focus of this project.

Several key historiographical debates will animate this study's questions and concerns. First, I will deal with debates surrounding the perceived evolution of Francoist dictatorship. Temporally, leading historians of Francoism have also long suggested the division of the regime, sometimes known as the 'First' and 'Second' (or 'Late') Francoisms.³ Others have suggested that the Franco regime can be understood in 'ages,' such as the age of autarchy during the 1940s, the opening of the country to foreign markets and movement in the 1950s, and technocratic developmentalism in the 1960s.⁴ Although historians tend to disagree over the timing and nature of change within Franco's government, there is a generally agreed upon interpretation of the regime undergoing dramatic transformations that began during World War II to help make it a more palatable member of the international community to the ascendent liberal democracies of Western Europe and the United States.⁵ Subsequently, these debates and temporal generalizations have sometimes caused descriptions of experiences in Francoist Spain to become easily overgeneralized. Analysis based on strictly regimented temporal notions of Franco's regime can introduce greater nuance in explaining how the regime evolved and how this evolution was felt by Spain's people.

Second, I will develop a paper which addresses Spain's long history of regional and cultural diversity. Although Spain may be easy to define as a geopolitical entity with clear

³ For an example of such analysis, see Glicerio Sánchez Recio, ed. *El primer franquismo (1936-1959)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 1999).

⁴ For an example of this interpretation, see José Luis García Delgado, Juan Pablo Fusi, José Luis García Delgado, Santos Juliá, Edward Malefakis, and Stanley G. Payne, *Franquismo: El juicio de la historia* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2000).

⁵ Julio Gil Pecharromán, *Con permiso de la autoridad: La España de Franco, 1939-1975* (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 2008), 51.

borders, coming to a definition of what Spain is, as well as what it was during Francoism, can become a polemic issue among Spaniards. Spatially, the multiple regional identities within Spain, such as Catalans, Basques, and Galicians, complicate the definition of where the country's national identity begin and end. Spain is a country that has long been divided between the process of constructing a national cultural identity and the persistence of subnational identities in different regions of the country.⁶ This tension was central to many of the conflicts relating to Francoism, especially ones in the cultural sphere. My study will focus on the region of Catalonia because of its exceptionality within the Spanish cultural sphere, the special relationship between Francoist ideology and Catalan identity, and the ability to better describe the experiences of a particular section of the Spanish population that a regional focus provides. Catalonia is a cultural hub of Spain with a rich press culture, which also predisposes it to be a strong subject for a study of periodicals during Franco's dictatorship. The same regionalized understanding that many historians have applied to the history of Spain has not made its way into the historiography of the Spanish press during the Franco Era. This need and the new international attention paid to Catalonia in the wake of the region's 2017 independence crisis make it an important time to bridge these gaps in historical study.

With an eye towards these debates, this thesis will study Francoist press censorship through a Catalan lens and with the goal of reexamining debate regarding how Franco's regime evolved. Francoist censorship has been a largely understudied topic in comparison with the larger historiographical landscape of the regime's politics. Most studies dealing specifically with the censorship apparatus of Francoist Spain have taken a national scope and have privileged a

⁶ Antonio Feros, *Speaking of Spain: The Evolution of Race and Nation in the Hispanic World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 12-13.

legalistic point of view, relying heavily on documents produced by the Spanish government. Such studies include Carlos Barrera's *Periodismo y franquismo: De la censura a la apertura* (1995) and Justino Sinova's *La censura de prensa durante el franquismo* (2006). While a legal understanding of censorship as a governmental system is important, these studies do not delve into the wealth of digitized periodical content that originates from all ages of Francoist Spain aside from perhaps editions of the largest Spanish newspapers. In Catalonia's public libraries alone, there are well over 1,250,000 pages of digitized newspapers, magazines, and other periodicals from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries available to historians. In the chapters that follow, I will give primacy to these periodical sources and build a more popularized social history of how censorship truly impacted the press content with which Catalans interacted. My central argument will begin with the fact that the state structures of press censorship did not demonstrate the same type of evolution that historians have traditionally suggested took place in the regime during the 1940s and 1950s. Instead, it was largely a stagnant system that the state implemented unevenly across Spain. I will also argue that the imperfect and uneven nature of Francoist censorship in fact allowed certain expressions of Catalan identity and nationalism, despite the regime's deep ideological opposition to such ideas. With this reality in mind, I conclude that evidence from Catalan periodicals should be cause for reexamination of the role of the Francoist state in the Spanish public sphere, especially in the country's "peripheral" regions of Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia.

The choice to place emphasis on the periodical content that resulted from the system of Francoist censorship shifts the main perspective from previous scholarship focused on legal analysis to one based instead on the tangible effects of the policies of censorship on content that Spaniards read. Thus, this approach provides valuable insights into the lived experiences of

Spanish citizens and their interactions with print media under Franco's rule. Through analysis of these experiences, I will trace how Spaniards' relationships with print media evolved, or failed to, as the Francoist state attempted to react to its changing international standing during the 1940s and 50s. The fall of the Axis powers in World War II caused a crisis in the sphere of international relations for Franco's regime.⁷ After the fortunes of Hitler and Mussolini began to fail, Franco's regime attempted to present itself as a state with little connection to the Fascist powers through a combination of both aesthetic and systemic transformations.⁸ Those historians who have engaged with Francoist censorship have done little to address the degree to which transformations in the realm of state press control mirror or diverge from larger national patterns. Through placing emphasis on the actual results of censorship in the form of published content, I will address the extent to which any real change came to print press before 1955, when the United Nations decided to reverse its condemnations of Franco's government and accept Spain as a member.

This project's main sources will be periodicals from the four provincial capitals of Catalonia: Barcelona, Girona, Tarragona, and Lleida. While Barcelona has long functioned as the cultural and economic center of Catalonia, the other Catalan provincial capitals housed their own local newspapers as well. These publications commonly engaged with different issues and pursued different periodical styles from those found in Barcelona. The inclusion of these publications is important to expanding the paper's scope in order to make it a truly Catalan one rather than simply a Barcelonese one.

⁷ Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism in Spain, 1923-1977* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 391-93.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 395-98.

To summarize, with these historiographical interests in mind, this work focuses on applying popularized and regionalized methods to study the nature of the Spanish press from 1938 to 1955. While the experiences of the Spanish press through this era cannot be a stand-in for developments in other parts of Spanish society, they point to patterns that contradict traditional understandings of the historical development of Franco's Spain. They suggest that regional minority cultures did have a place within the official culture of the Francoist state, despite the centralization and Spanish nationalism upon which the dictatorship was founded and that the liberalization of culture under Francoism was not a linear process.

The following chapters will demonstrate this uneven change through a combination of legal, cultural, and political analysis. First, I will summarize the political and cultural development of Catalan identity and the conflicts that it created with the ideology of Francoism. Second, I will analyze the Press Law of 1938, which governed Francoist censorship until 1966, and its relation to contemporaneous systems of legal censorship across Europe. This section will provide most of the legal analysis of Franco's censorship system, which is still necessary despite it not being this paper's main focus. Third, I will study how this legal censorship affected Catalan journalists and periodical content during the age of Axis dominance in Europe from roughly 1938 to 1942. Finally, I will then compare this period with the type of content produced in the postwar era from about 1945 to 1955.

Chapter 1: The Spanish Peoples: Francoism and Catalan Nationalism

“Catalonia is Spain, but the people are not Spanish”⁹

Before discussing the type of censorship system that the Francoist system constructed, it is important to understand the unique Catalan cultural identity that was commonly restricted at the hands of censors. Many other scholarly studies have noted that censorship does not only restrict certain ideas, but it creates intellectual space for the expression of others.¹⁰ Censorship, in many cases, is not simply an oppressive force that creates cultural voids because of its ability to ban or prevent publication of certain works, but one that also fills that new space with ideas or concepts of which the censoring body approves. Because of this, it is also important to understand the ideas that Francoism both privileged and opposed, especially as those ideas relate to the special cultural context of Catalonia.

Despite being a single political entity, Spain was and continues to be a country composed of multiple subnational groups. Beyond Catalans, large Basque and Galician populations exist in the north of the country and the pre-Francoist Second Spanish Republic (1931-39) granted Catalans, Basques, and Galicians “Statutes of Autonomy” within the Spanish state. These statutes granted special rights for local government and regional administration to Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia. This recognition of subnational groups within Spain was a hallmark of the politics of the Second Spanish Republic and a significant departure from the

⁹ Ernest Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon* (New York: Scribner, 1932), 265.

¹⁰ George Talbot, *Censorship in Fascist Italy, 1922-43* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 38-43.

political orthodoxy of the Bourbon monarchy that had ruled Spain for the previous two centuries.¹¹ Although debates over state structure and regional devolution of powers had long been alive in Spain, Madrid had reigned supreme throughout most of modern Spanish history and had been able to pursue a rather centralized state structure.¹² Just as the republican form of government, which had previously only existed in Spain for one year in the 1870s, was considered radical, so too was the idea of a decentralized Spanish state. Throughout the remainder of this chapter, I will explain the forces within Catalonia that helped drive forward political movements for regional autonomy and the reaction that those movements engendered.

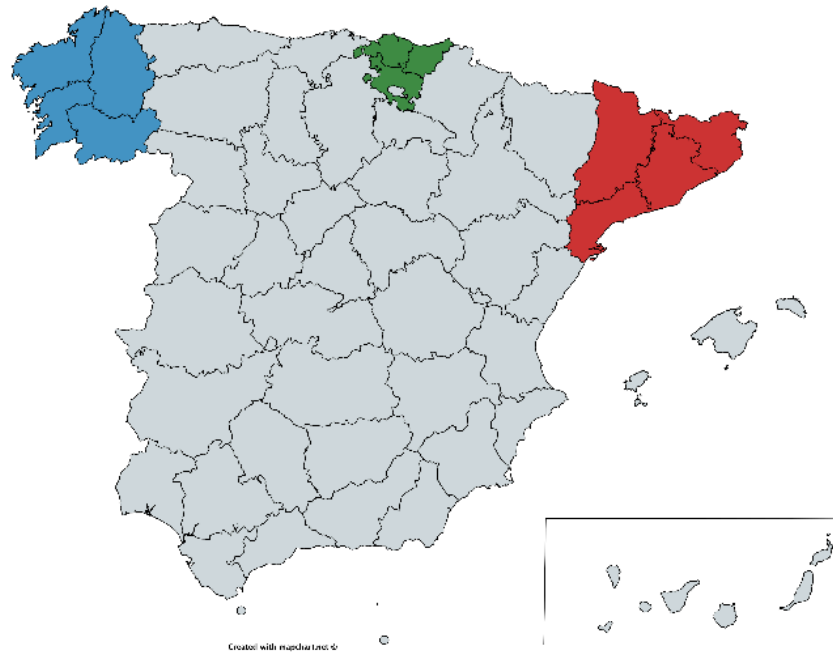


Figure 1: Modern Administrative Map of Spain. Catalonia appears in red, the Basque Country is marked in green, and Galicia is colored blue. The same boundaries for these communities applied during the era of the Second Republic.¹³

¹¹ Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939* (New York: Penguin Group, 2006), 5.

¹² *Ibid.*, 6.

¹³ Map created at <https://mapchart.net/spain.html>.

Catalan History and Building to Republican Politics-

By the time that the Second Republic came to power in 1931, Catalan society was already especially sensitive to questions of regional power and autonomy. While Catalonia had long held a unique cultural identity within Spain, the early 20th century represented a unique moment in Catalan history from both a cultural and political perspective. Culturally, the end of the 19th century had seen an explosion of activity within the Catalan cultural sphere. This era, known as the *Renaixença*, saw a revival in the use of the Catalan language and a renewed interest in Catalan regional culture.¹⁴ This movement helped expand the footprint of the Catalan language in the literary world and encouraged the development of the region's artistic identity. As a result, a largely bourgeois social grouping began to develop a stronger sense of regional identity and the teaching of Catalan expanded.

The *Renaixença* proved an important moment for Catalan political history as well because the cultural revival of Catalan culture and traditions eventually became the base for the development of a political regionalism in Catalonia as well.¹⁵ In the early years of the 20th century, Catalan regional politics began to reflect this deep cultural change. The *Lliga Regionalista* (Regionalist League) was founded to promote the interests of Catalonia on the political right whereas *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC), or Republican Left of Catalonia, began to introduce Catalan nationalism, or Catalanism, into left-wing politics as

¹⁴ Joan-Lluís Marfany, *Nacionalisme espanyol i catalanitat: Cap a una revisió de la Renaixença* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 2017), 225.

¹⁵ John Etherington, "Nationalism, Nation, and Territory: Jacint Verdaguer and the Catalan *Renaixença*," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33 (2010): 1814.

well.¹⁶ Regional identity had become a much more active force in the lives of Catalans and, crucially, it found parties to provide it with electoral advocacy. In many ways, Catalan identity was a force that contrasted with the larger Spanish cultural hegemony that its Castilian regions dominated. Likewise, Catalan parties like the *Lliga* and ERC also represented a contrast with national Spanish power in the electoral arena.

This political Catalanism helped extend the long history of conflict between Catalonia and the central Spanish government. Divisions between Catalonia and other parts of Spain had created conflict before, such as during the Reapers' War (1640-59) and the War of Spanish Succession (1700-14), the latter of which saw the abolition of Catalan home rule structures that had existed since the Middle Ages. The War of Spanish Succession saw the centralization of the monarchy under the legal structures laid out in the *Nueva Planta*, a central sticking point for the relationship between Catalans and Madrid throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. With regionalism on the rise, the early 20th century saw multiple attempts at regaining a degree of autonomy by Spain's peripheral regions.

Despite some liberalization of the monarchy in the 19th century, Spain remained a largely centralized state until the arrival of the Second Spanish Republic in 1931.¹⁷ It was because of this history that the Republic's approach to regional rule was so exceptional. During the Republican era, Catalans enjoyed increased regional freedoms that had not existed for over 200 years. However, this also meant that the central Spanish state had also lost unprecedented

¹⁶ Jordi Argelaguet, Margarita Gómez-Reino Cachafeiro, Romain Pasquier, "L'Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya: La troisième force de l'espace politique catalan," *Pôle Sud* 20 (2004): 9.

¹⁷ Ibid.

amounts of political power. That political reality helped stoke the flames of anti-Republican political reaction.

España- Una, grande, y libre: The Doctrines and History of Francoism

“Spain is a universal unit of destiny. All conspiracy against that unit is repulsive. All separatism is a crime that we shall not pardon.”¹⁸

These words form the second of the twenty-seven points of the program of the Spanish Phalanx of the Juntas of the National Syndicalist Offensive (*FE de las JONS*) that were published in the Spanish paper *ABC*. The *FE de las JONS*, one of Spain’s largest proto-fascist parties during the Republican era, would later be one of the groups merged by Franco’s government during the Spanish Civil War to become the Traditionalist Spanish Phalanx and of the Juntas of the National Syndicalist Offensive (*FET y de las JONS*). Beyond carrying a frustratingly verbose name, the *FET y de las JONS* eventually became the single ruling party of the Francoist dictatorship. Later, it also became known as the *Movimiento*.¹⁹ Defining the party’s ideology, along with that of Franco’s government more broadly, has been a topic of extensive and ongoing debate within the historiography of Francoism. Some, perhaps most notably the American historian Stanley G. Payne, have seen fit to locate Francoism along a

¹⁸ “El programa de Falange Española de las JONS,” *ABC*, November 30, 1934, morning edition, 32.

¹⁹ For the sake of brevity, I will be referring to the party as the *Falange*, the more common abbreviated name, which means “Phalanx” in Spanish.

spectrum of the radical right between Benito Mussolini's more "extreme" Italian Fascism and António Oliveira de Salazar's more "moderate" Portuguese corporatist system.²⁰ Others see Francoism as a government with little ideology beyond maintaining oligarchy and only related to Fascism through intellectualism.²¹ Still others see a true commitment to Fascist ideals in Franco's government until at least 1945.²²

Despite these disagreements, there is a strong historical consensus that the Francoist state was at its most radical before the fall of the Axis powers and that it was, in some form or another, a radically right-wing system. These points are crucial for building a foundational understanding of Francoism and the politics that grounded it. Franco's Spain was from its very beginning an authoritarian state with a hierarchical structure that placed Franco at the top under the title of *Caudillo* or *Jefe de Estado* (simply, "Head of State"). In the regime's early years, the state did not attempt to provide dressings necessary to create even an outward appearance of democratic legitimacy.²³ Naturally, these authoritarian political aspects would facilitate a comparison with Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany. Just as Geoff Eley, the renowned historian of Nazi Germany, has argued that comparisons between Fascist Italy and German National Socialism must be made with caution, one must also be careful to not overgeneralize the similarities between the system of Franco with those of Mussolini and Hitler.²⁴ However, it is still important to consider how these regimes built off of each other, especially in the case of Franco's Spain due to its late foundation relative to the Nazi and Italian Fascist systems. All

²⁰ Stanley G. Payne, *The Franco Regime, 1936-1975* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 632.

²¹ Herbert R. Southworth, "Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Definition des Franquismus als Faschismus," *Iberoamerica* 27 (1986): 18.

²² Martí Marín i Corbera, "Fascismo en España. Política local y control gubernativo en la Cataluña franquista: ¿Fue el porciolismo una fórmula aperturista?," *Hispania* 199 (1998): 656-57.

²³ *Ibid.*, 657.

²⁴ Geoff Eley, *Nazism as Fascism: Violence, Ideology, and the Ground of Consent in Germany 1930-1945* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 211.

three systems shared an open disdain for liberal democracy, staunch anti-Communism, and engaged in a form of popular politics that was new to the political movements on the European Right. Additionally, and importantly in the context of this chapter, these movements all held an interest in some form of a regeneration or recovery of national identity.

Just as the National Socialists played off memories of German defeat in World War I and Italian Fascists leaned into a desire to build an internationally recognized vision of Italy as a ‘modern’ nation, so too did the right-wing predecessors of Francoism rely on a reimagining of Spanish national pride in the wake of national crisis.²⁵ The works of José Ortega y Gasset provide context on how this concept of national crisis translated to the context of Spain and Francoism. Herbert R. Southworth describes José Ortega y Gasset as the philosopher who gave “an intellectual form to the cultural basis of Spanish Fascism.”²⁶ Ortega y Gasset focuses extensively on concepts of Spanish pride within his works and it is worth considering his writings when attempting to contextualize Francoism and the movements that led to it. He writes that Spaniards of the early 20th century grew up surrounded by memories of the “terrible date of 1898.”²⁷ Here, he refers to Spain’s defeat in the Spanish-American War and the final destruction of the country’s Latin American empire. As a country that had been long defined by its extensive imperial holdings, the final defeat of Spain in its colonies served as a moment of national crisis and helped create a sense of national decline, especially for those imperialist elements of Spanish political life.

The incarnation of right-wing politics that Francoism represents incorporates both aspects of traditional Spanish conservatism as well as influence of the Fascist Right that had been

²⁵ Ruth Ben Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities: Italy, 1922-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 18.

²⁶ Southworth, “Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Definition des Franquismus als Faschismus,” 4.

²⁷ Ibid., 5.

ascendant in much of Europe during the 1930s. The foundation of the Falange represents a quite literal fusion of these two brands of right-wing politics. Franco merged the aforementioned FE de las JONS with the Carlist Unión Tradicionalista (UT), to form his ruling party. The UT and its ideology of Carlism represented the brand of Catholic and monarchist politics that had been a mainstay in the Spanish right-wing since the early-19th century.²⁸ This type of ideological fusion is one aspect of what makes defining the ideology of Francoism difficult. Some have suggested that the willingness of Franco to construct a larger, and sometimes somewhat uncomfortable, ideological tent within his government demonstrates a submission of ideology to the necessity of survival in the face of domestic instability during the Spanish Civil War and later hostility from the international community in the wake of World War II. However, this interpretation ignores the fact that these disparate branches of the Spanish Right could, in fact, come to a consensus on many guiding political principles.

One of these, which stood in contrast to the mainstream politics of the Republican Era, was the construction of a centralized state and the destruction of regional autonomy. Ramón Serrano Suñer, one of Franco's ministers who held many key posts in the Spanish government during the regime's first five years, wrote of the "secession of regions" from Spain alongside factors such as class struggle, agnosticism, and a potential Communist coup d'état as symptoms of the "ruin of the nation" during the Republican years.²⁹ For a movement that held principles such as order, hierarchy, and national identity as core ideological pillars, the idea of a political movement meant to expand regional home rule and protect the use of local languages was horrific. It is also worth noting that, as Franco's Falange was born out of an anti-Republican

²⁸ Jesús Millán, "Una reconsideración del carlismo," *Ayer* 29 (1998): 94.

²⁹ Ramón Serrano Suñer, *Entre Hendaya y Gibraltar* (Madrid: Ediciones y publicaciones españolas, 1947), 36.

military coup, anti-regionalism was yet another way to demonstrate a commitment to anti-Republicanism.

Benedict Anderson made the distinction between Official and Popular Nationalism in his famous book *Imagined Communities*. In it, he argues that states developed their own “official” nationalism to fight the political threat posed by conceptions of “popular” national identities that began to spread through the masses of European countries during the 19th century.³⁰ While the case of 20th-century Spain is more contemporary, Anderson’s concepts help illustrate the central tension between the ideology of Franco’s Nationalists and Catalan nationalism. Catalan nationalism posed a threat to the traditional ruling order of Spain, its territorial integrity, and the self-image of Spanish nationalists. Thus, a hostility to peripheral identities became a central aspect of Spanish nationalism. There is nothing ‘essential’ about Catalan identity which inevitably brought the region and its culture into conflict with Francoism. Indeed, there were large sections of Catalan society which did not identify with any regionalist cause and felt more aligned to Franco and his allies. Instead, the conflict between regionalist sections of Catalan society and the right-wing proponents of Francoism largely is emblematic of a larger center-periphery tension. With Francoism, like Italian Fascism and National Socialism, siding so heavily towards centralization, Catalans became an enemy because of the regionalist governmental structures for which certain political forces in the region advocated. This division was only exacerbated by the popular image Catalonia took on during the Spanish Civil War.

³⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised ed. (New York: Verso, 2016), 110.

The Powder Keg Explodes: The Spanish Civil War and the Catalan Role in National Conflict

The Spanish Civil War holds obvious significance in the context of Francoism as the event that brought the system to power. In 1936, the victory of the left-wing Popular Front in Spain's general elections caused right-wing and military leaders to begin planning a coup against the new government.³¹ This coup, which began in Spanish Morocco on July 17, 1936, failed to seize complete control of the country. Instead, Spain found itself divided between the Nationalists, who supported the coup, and the Republicans, who supported the elected government. The Civil War began immediately.

As the front lines of the war solidified, Catalonia became one of the most important regions of the Republican side. The metropolitan area of Barcelona was one of the most heavily industrialized areas of Spain in the 1930s and provided an important source of labor and economic productivity.³² Workers in Barcelona, like many other Republican cities across Spain, also became crucial foot soldiers in the militias that fought the military uprising.³³ Barcelona carried a unique character within the Republican war effort, however, because of the radical leftism that characterized the city's politics. While Catalonia more generally was also rather politically radical, Barcelona served as one of the capitals of Spanish anarchism. Earlier in the century, Barcelona had developed the nickname of the *Rosa de fuego* (Rose of fire) in reference to the stark contrast between the frequent street violence that occurred between radical workers

³¹ Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 49.

³² *Ibid.*, 12.

³³ *Ibid.*, 105.

and the hired arms of the urban bourgeois class and the renowned beauty of the city's new modernist architecture.³⁴

When the Popular Front came to power in 1936, it did so with the support of left-wing political formations ranging from Spanish Communists to socialists and even with the passive acquiescence of Anarchist trade unions.³⁵ The Popular Front had a strong electoral showing in Catalonia and once the Civil War broke out, it was easy for Franco's Nationalists to conflate the region's leftist political traditions and support for the Popular Front with Catalan identity itself.³⁶

The modern history of both Catalonia and Spanish right-wing politics set them on a collision course once Franco came to power. Catalonia had become a region that was politically dominated by regional nationalists and left-wing parties at the same time as the Spanish right had become more nationalistic, grown less tolerant of national minorities like Catalans, and began to see Spain's left-wing as an existential threat to the country's existence and identity. While there was a long running historic conflict between Catalonia and the central positions of authority in Spain that Francoists came to occupy, the ideological outlook of Francoism only exacerbated this existing tension. In chapter two, this paper will explore how Francoist ideology took legal form, specifically in censorship law, and how this would come to shape the history of the Catalan press during the mid-20th century.

³⁴ Ibid., 12-13.

³⁵ Ibid., 46.

³⁶ Ester Boaqueria Diago and Alfons Medina Cambrón, "La evolución de la propaganda de la Generalitat de Cataluña durante la Guerra Civil: Jaume Miravittles y el Comisariado de Propaganda (1936-1939)," *Historia y comunicación social* (2020): 334.

Chapter 2: The Press Law of 1938 and Censorship from Above

Censorship as a government function and responsibility found itself paradoxically both constantly in flux and remarkably static throughout the first thirty years of Francoist rule in Spain. On one hand, the responsibilities for censorship were, especially during the first ten years of the Francoist *Nuevo Estado*, being passed between numerous ministerial portfolios.³⁷ However, on the other hand, from 1938 to 1966, a single law formed the core of the Francoist censorship system.³⁸ This created a situation under which the letter of the law was consistent, but its application changed regularly. This single law, known as the Press Law of 1938 or the Suñer Law, in reference to its creator, Ramón Serrano Suñer, formed the legal bases of censorship throughout the entire early period of Francoist Spain. This chapter will be dedicated to establishing the importance of this law, the system it attempted to create, and its implications for the press in mid-twentieth century Spain.

Towards the Press Law of 1938

In comparison with other right-wing governments of 1930s Europe, Franco's state was born out of unique circumstances. Rather than being appointed head of government, as had happened with Mussolini and Hitler, Franco came to power by achieving victory in the Spanish Civil War. Franco's rebels had controlled parts of Spain since the war began in 1936 but did not

³⁷ Carlos Barrera, *Periodismo y franquismo: De la censura a la apertura* (Barcelona: Ediciones internacionales universitarias, 1995), 45.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 44.

control the entire country until 1939. This meant that the legal roots of Franco's regime were born out of a time of mixed priorities, when Franco oversaw a heterogeneous political alliance of military officials, Falangists, and conservative Catholics that was both attempting to establish governmental authority and win a civil war.³⁹ Franco and his inner circle never had the luxury of being able to focus completely on the creation of their new state. Thus, Franco's government was, generally, rather slow to consolidate its legal structures. 1938 proved to be an important year for the institutionalization of Franco's regime as several important laws were written, including the first of the so-called "Fundamental Laws" of the regime in the form of the Labor Charter (*Fuero de Trabajo*).⁴⁰ The passage of the Press Law of 1938 so early relative to the institutionalization of much of the new state should suggest the high importance that Franco and his allies placed on the press.

During the period between the outbreak of the Civil War and the changes made by the Press Law of 1938, censorship had been a responsibility that fell directly under military authority rather than a political or bureaucratic one.⁴¹ Submission of print materials to the military's censors was mandatory as was maintaining space for publication of materials relating to public order and politics, such as notices relating to the development of the Civil War.⁴² Even though these directives were issued shortly after the military uprising in July 1936, the military censorship apparatus did not truly begin to form until early 1937 when Nationalist leadership created the Delegation for the Press and Propaganda.⁴³ The Delegation was responsible for the

³⁹ Southworth, "Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Definition des Franquismus als Faschismus," 10.

⁴⁰ Joan María Thomàs i Andreu, "La configuración del franquismo. El partido y las instituciones" in *El primer franquismo (1936-1959)*, ed. Glicerio Sánchez Recio (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 1999), 43-44.

⁴¹ Justino Sinova, *La censura de prensa durante el franquismo* (Barcelona: Random House Mondadori, 2006), 92.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 96.

control of information in the Nationalist sector, which included not only censorship, but leading the propaganda projects of Franco's movement as well.⁴⁴

While this was undoubtedly an important era for the development of Franco's state, it can be difficult to analyze the type of periodical content produced by the Spanish press during this time. First of all, many national Spanish publications found themselves under the control of the side of the Civil War with which they were politically at odds. In the case of Catalonia, discussing right-wing press content in the region is near impossible during the years of 1937 and 1938 because during that time most conservative papers in Barcelona had come under the control of Anarchist trade unions. An example of this is the conservative Catalanist paper, *La Veu de Catalunya*, which was taken over by the CNT-FAI, one of Spain's largest Anarchist unions, and given a sub-heading of "Anti-Fascist Newspaper" before having its publication ultimately suspended in January 1937.⁴⁵ The two other major centers of right-wing publications in Spain were Madrid, which came under Republican control, and Seville, which was the largest Spanish city to fall into Nationalist hands upon the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. The conservative monarchist daily *ABC*, which has historically published from both Madrid and Seville, continued its operations in Seville during the Civil War and can offer a useful vehicle for analysis of press content during the era of military censorship. Much of the *ABC* content of the age of military censorship intended to either establish the authority of Franco and his system or to provide updates, which were most likely selectively highlighted, regarding the progress of the war.⁴⁶ In

⁴⁴ Ibid., 97.

⁴⁵ "La Veu de Catalunya suspèn la seva publicació per manca de matèries primes," *La Veu de Catalunya*, January 8, 1937, 1.

⁴⁶ José López Prudencio, "Una patria: España. Un Caudillo: Franco," *ABC*, January 17, 1937, 3; "En los frentes de Teruel obtuvieron importantes progresos, castigando duramente al enemigo," *ABC*, January 17, 1937, 5.

the example of the January 17, 1937 edition of *ABC*, one sees this exact practice of mandated military reports being published in Spanish papers.⁴⁷

In comparing this era's content with that produced by papers after the Press Law of 1938, there are both continuities and sharp differences. For example, while the dry, factual, but ideologically guided reporting of current events heavily mirrors subsequent coverage of World War II by Francoist papers, the didactic editorial content which one sees approached in the post-Civil War era was not present in the papers of 1937-38 to the same degree.

Institutionalizing the Fourth Estate-

When it came time for Franco's government to establish a formal bureaucratic and political structure for censorship, there was an extensive collection of foreign models for a censorship system which had sprung up across Europe in the 1920s and 30s. As Franco chose Ramón Serrano Suñer, his brother in-law and close advisor, to create the legal system to control press, propaganda, and information, the places where Suñer would look for inspiration were clear. Before the outbreak of civil war, Suñer had been a member of the more radical and proto-fascist section of right-wing Spanish politics and had his political views strongly influenced by time spent studying in Rome during the early years of Mussolini's rule.⁴⁸ The censorship system created by the Suñer Law in 1938 took inspiration from right-wing systems across Europe,

⁴⁷ "En los frentes de Teruel," *ABC*, 5.

⁴⁸ Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 274.

including Fascist Italy as well as Nazi Germany and Salazar's Portugal.⁴⁹ In finding his influences for the system of censorship he would help develop, Suñer held a special affection for the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, the brainchild of Joseph Goebbels.⁵⁰

The text of the Press Law of 1938 demonstrates not only important foundational elements of Francoist censorship, but also reveals the central philosophy regarding how Suñer and similar thinkers within the Francoist coalition perceived the press and its purpose. First, the law's preamble makes it clear that Suñer did not only consider control over the press to be an essential function of the Spanish state, but also that journalism was a state service performed by journalists who were, first and foremost, public servants. The law includes an interpretation of the press as the essential communicator of the state's orders and the creator of collective consciousness, for which reasons journalism must not be allowed to "live at the margins of the state."⁵¹ This measure provided legal space for the power of the state to force especially indoctrinating propagandistic content into publications.⁵² The state also saw fit to argue that this law was, in fact, finally a true realization of freedom of the press in Spain. It contrasted the conception of the press as a "national institution" at the service of the people with what it saw as the subservience of the Republican press to the interests of private capital or Marxist political influence.⁵³

⁴⁹ José Miguel Delgado Idarreta, "Prensa y propaganda bajo el franquismo," in *Centro y periferias: Prensa, impresos y territorios en el mundo hispánico contemporáneo*, eds. Nathalie Ludec and Françoise Dubosquet Lairys (Paris: Presse, Imprimés, Lecture dans l'Aire Romane, 2004), 224.

⁵⁰ Sinova, *La censura de prensa durante el franquismo*, 104.

⁵¹ *Boletín Oficial del Estado* 550, 24 April 1938, 6938. [Henceforth, sources from the *Boletín Oficial del Estado* will be listed with the common abbreviation "BOE".]

⁵² Delgado Idarreta, "Prensa y propaganda bajo el franquismo," 229-230.

⁵³ *BOE* 550, 24 April 1938, 6938.

While the concept of the press as simultaneously both free and guided by the paternalistic hand of the state is quite contradictory, it does help demonstrate what the Falange regarded as the Spanish press' societal role and how it should be reformed. In order to realize the goal of removing the press from the sway of its supposedly undue political and economic influences, one of the Press Law's first measures was a series of structural reforms to the Spanish press meant to bring periodicals directly under state control. The law delegated regulatory power over the press to the newly established National Press Service and declared the state's authority to regulate the length of press publications as well as the number that could exist at one time.⁵⁴ Measures such as these, in tandem with new laws which restricted periodicals to only being able to publish out of Spain's provincial capitals, were meant to create a tighter network over which more effective control of content production could be exercised.⁵⁵ This meant that in the case of Catalonia, the only four cities which could house newspapers became Barcelona, Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona.

Next, the law explicitly laid out the power of the Spanish state to censor periodical content. Rather than just providing a vehicle for information the state wished to be communicated to the Spanish population, it also attempted to control the opinions expressed within periodicals. The National Press Service was granted the power to "officially punish all writing that directly or indirectly attempts to diminish the prestige of the Nation or of the Regime."⁵⁶ The law empowered an extensive new system of press censorship which combined both bureaucratic systems that combed through content awaiting publication and self-censorship. The latter was especially common in Spain's smaller cities where establishing such an extensive

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Barrera, *Periodismo y franquismo*, 45.

⁵⁶ BOE 550, 24 April 1938, 6940.

censorship apparatus was impossible.⁵⁷ As Justino Sinova demonstrated in his thorough study of regime documents detailing press censorship, the periodicals which were subject to this more intensive form of content review commonly had entire sections of prospective publications crossed out in pen.⁵⁸

An aspect of the state's new power over the press, which served to both restrict publication freedom and to push forward state propaganda, was the establishment of the state's power to impose specific coverage of a topic, a practice later known as a *consigna*. *Consignas* were state directives which allowed authorities to specify that a story or topic must include or exclude specific information.⁵⁹ This measure could be applied to topics that were both broad and not specific to a particular event or hyper-focused on a single particular news story or event. *Consignas* were present in coverage ranging from such broad directives as directing how the press should discuss communism to stories on how the games of the regime's preferred football team, Real Madrid, should be covered.⁶⁰ Thus, *consignas* serve as an example of both more passive and active censorship. Their influence sometimes ranged over years as a topic remained in relative consistent discussion in the news and in such cases, the state's presence loomed in the background as publications self-censored by following these directives. However, in other cases *consignas* were immediate reactions to news stories and represented a very direct guiding hand of the state over published content in the short term.

The empowered nature of state censors combined with the greatly decreased independence of writers and journalists to blur the line between state and press even further. The

⁵⁷ Barrera, *Periodismo y franquismo*, 45.

⁵⁸ Sinova, *La censura de prensa durante el franquismo*, 176.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 191.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 267, 292.

Press Law undertook several measures to redefine the relationship between journalists and the state, including creating an official state registry with which journalists were required to register and granting the state the power to appoint the director of individual papers.⁶¹ The state was thus able to control the people who were writing press content, a factor which enabled many of its hands-off self-censorship measures.

With all of the measures that the Press Law of 1938 attempted to establish in mind, it is worth taking a step back to consider how the system of press publication and censorship was intended to work under Franco's new regime. Clearly, the new function of the press was meant to be a foundational building block for a new Spain governed by an authoritarian state of a radically right-wing stripe. The print press would be the tool for this new state to communicate its ideals and beliefs to the population and to stamp out public expressions of dissent towards the new regime. However, the law was also meant to change the relationship between the state, periodicals, journalists, and censors. It tried to create a new set of information networks with the state at the center, using a variety of direct and indirect measures to control the content that would appear before Spanish readers. It attempted to transform Spanish journalists into state functionaries who would not only report the news, but help maintain the official Francoist line on cultural and political issues. The new system would also divide Spanish journalism, creating regional publishing hubs and organizing vast bureaucratic bodies to handle papers in Spain's largest population centers. Local press would be marginalized as provincial capitals and major cities were reinforced as the country's periodical hubs. In other words, the Press Law of 1938 enumerated an authoritarian system which hoped to merge the press with the state and fit well with the ethos of late-1930s European right-wing governance. The Press Law of 1938 hoped to

⁶¹ BOE 550, 24 April 1938, 6939.

be a foundational document for a regime that would maintain a dictatorial, and in some ways Fascistic, grip over the daily lives of Spaniards for years to come.

However, was this what censorship really became? Did a country which struggled to feed its people for the decade following the conclusion of its civil war really have the resources necessary to establish such an invasive and far-reaching system?⁶² On the contrary, if Spain had sufficiently reformed to be accepted for UN membership by the mid-1950s, could the press really have continued to be governed by such a hardline law until the late-1960s? Did the Falange, an organization which had been born from a merger of two fairly marginalized parties, really have the necessary rank-and-file support from which to draw acceptable censors, journalists, and editors? Such apparent contradictions and challenges to the censorship system the Press Law of 1938 looked to create were only accentuated by the new geopolitical realities of the fall of Fascism and the political domination of western Europe by the liberal democracies of the Allied Powers.

In reality, the implementation of the Press Law's measures across Spain's many regions was uneven and more nuanced than its language may suggest. This is especially true in Catalonia where imperfect centralization and the weight of Barcelona within the world of the press allowed for a stronger local hand in guiding the evolution of periodical publication. This stronger hand created a number of conditions unique to the press system in Catalonia. Political necessity mandated that editors and writers who were not as closely aligned with the regime as one would typically expect were occasionally given prominent positions within Catalan papers and magazines, certain periodicals published content that aligned with a conservative vision of

⁶² Miguel Ángel del Arco Blanco, "'Morir de hambre'. Autarquía, escasez, y enfermedad en la España del primer franquismo," *Pasado y Memoria. Revista de Historia Contemporánea* 5 (2006): 241-242.

Catalan nationalism, and sometimes Franco's regime itself even attempted to extract legitimacy from subversions of nationalist discourse. The following chapters will engage with issues such as these within the Catalan press landscape as international pressures on Spain's domestic politics transformed.

Chapter 3: Franco's First Journalists: The Public Sphere in Catalonia During the "Axis Era"

Francesc Vilanova has written that the Francoist task in Catalonia in the immediate aftermath of the Spanish Civil War was to lead the "construction of a unique alternative intellectual culture" to break with the region's past.⁶³ Armed with a strong legal foothold in the form of the Press Law of 1938, Franco's supporters in Catalonia quickly turned to the periodical market as a main venue for the development of this new cultural project. In theory, Catalonia's local press should have represented a type of *tabula rasa* for the development of new publications because of the repression placed on the region's previously dominant newspapers and magazines, which were typically of a leftist or Catalan nationalist conviction. However, as this chapter shows, the task of building a new Catalan Francoist culture was not so easy. This chapter will survey publications from 1938 to 1942 in Barcelona and one of Catalonia's rural provinces, Gerona. Local influence on periodical operation, published content, and flirtation with different ideological viewpoints during the age when the most radical elements of Franco's system found themselves the most impowered reveal both the goals and the limits of the Francoist cultural project.

To begin, it is helpful to consider the different types of periodical sources this paper will utilize. Despite Catalonia's four regional capitals all serving as centers of publication, the periodical world, just like much of Catalan culture, revolved around Barcelona. Barcelona itself was home to a variety of newspapers and publications centered around different topics. For

⁶³ Francesc Vilanova, *Destino. Política de Unidad: La lluita per l'hegemonia cultural a la postguerra catalana (1939-1949)* (Palma de Mallorca: Leonard Muntaner, 2018): 13.

example, the national daily newspaper *La Vanguardia*, which the regime saw fit to rename *La Vanguardia Española*, had published from Barcelona since 1881 and continues to do so today. *La Vanguardia Española* was, and in its post-Francoist iteration continues to be, one of the largest newspapers in Spain.⁶⁴ In this paper, *La Vanguardia* functions as an illustrative foil for more local periodicals that published for an exclusively Catalan readership. The plentiful collection of local publications will provide the majority of print sources for this study. These smaller publications typically either originated in one of Catalonia's smaller regional capitals or were special interest magazines. Examples of such periodicals analyzed for this study include Girona's *El Pirineo* and Barcelona's weekly cultural magazine *Destino: Política de Unidad*. The periodicals selected for this chapter complement each other well by providing a combination of standard Francoist journalism geared towards a national audience in the form of *La Vanguardia*, a more local publication meant for a uniquely Catalan and bourgeois audience in the form of *Destino: Político de Unidad*, and a short-lived local paper from the countryside in the form of *El Pirineo*. Some of these publications will only be featured in chapter three as they ceased publication during the 1940s while others published throughout the entire Francoist period and, sometimes, into the period of modern Spanish democracy as well. By including the latter publications, this paper examines both the short-lived experiments and journalistic continuities of the pre- and post-1942 periods.

La Vanguardia Española: A Daily Newspaper and National Indoctrination-

⁶⁴ "*La Vanguardia* se afianza como tercer diario de España y líder en Catalunya," *La Vanguardia*, November 27, 2019.

La Vanguardia Española was founded in Barcelona in 1881 as *La Vanguardia*, a Spanish-language newspaper publishing nationally from a then profoundly bilingual city.⁶⁵ In the late-19th century, Barcelona was linguistically divided with Castilian Spanish being considered the language of prestige in the city with Catalan generally being the language of the masses.⁶⁶ After originating as the official partisan mouthpiece of the powerful centrist Liberal Party, *La Vanguardia* eventually became an independent paper that continued to published from a liberal viewpoint.⁶⁷ With this context in mind, *La Vanguardia* operates as a useful tool to analyze the nature of the national periodicals housed in Catalonia during Francoism. *La Vanguardia* serves as an example of a moderate publication with a long pre-Francoist life that found itself steered dramatically to the right to accommodate the editorial viewpoints of Franco's coalition.

La Vanguardia came under the direction of Francoist censorship on January 27, 1937, the day after Nationalist troops had entered Barcelona during their march across Catalonia. The paper's heading that had previously read "Newspaper at the Service of Democracy" had been replaced with "Newspaper at the Service of Spain and Generalissimo Franco."⁶⁸ *La Vanguardia*'s national scope and extensive readership made it home for pieces of highly ideological and indoctrinatory editorial journalism. The first editions published while Franco's armies controlled Barcelona serve as especially potent examples of this. The second page of this same first edition of *La Vanguardia* of the Francoist era contains a full-page article titled "Tremendous Entrance of the National Army into Barcelona."⁶⁹ In it, the unlisted author claims

⁶⁵ Emili Boix-Fuster, "La ideologia lingüística dels editorials de *La Vanguardia*," *Els Marges* 118 (2019): 90.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ "Barcelona para la España invicta de Franco," *La Vanguardia*, January 27, 1939, 1.

⁶⁹ "Entrada apoteósica del Ejército Nacional en Barcelona," *La Vanguardia*, January 27, 1939, 2.

that “[Barcelona] has not been conquered: It has been won by the irrefutable reason of the New Spain.”⁷⁰ Much of the rest of the article is dedicated to the dual purpose of establishing Francoist governing authority and of decrying the previously powerful left-wing government and labor groups. When discussing the former, the article leans on mentions of military power when establishing the authority of the rule of Franco’s Nationalists in Barcelona. During a discussion of possible resistance to the takeover of the city by Franco’s armies, the article says that Franco’s enemies had “intended to resist or, to put it better, thought about it,” but that Franco’s military organization “advanced incessantly and would have crushed them.”⁷¹ When discussing Barcelona’s former left-wing administration, the article refers to the leading Anarchist trade union, the CNT-FAI, as a group of arsonists.⁷² Such character attacks on previous authorities of the Republican era were key to setting the early tone of *La Vanguardia*’s Francoist content and demonstrating its clear break with its earlier publishing patterns.

Newspaper content during Francoism, like many other aspects of the regime, heavily reflected the international position of Spain and shifted to ensure the country’s palatability to its possible allies. From the breakout of the Spanish Civil War until 1942, Francoist Spain looked most favorably towards Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy as potential allies. This era, which Stanley G. Payne refers to as the “climax of European Fascism,” was characterized by the apparent strength of Europe’s Fascist powers in international affairs as well as warfare once World War II had broken out.⁷³ This general outlook of favorability towards Fascist states in

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 310.

international affairs continued in Franco's government until German strength first appeared to be faltering against the Soviet Union in 1942.⁷⁴

This pattern in foreign policy mirrors onto press content as well. As a result, newspapers such as *La Vanguardia* provided larger editorial voices to radical figures within Franco's Falangist coalition. New Francoist authors produced content with three important recurring themes: Adulation of Franco as both a military and national leader, virulent anti-Communism, and commentary on the exploding conflict in Europe. When discussing Franco, articles from the paper with the new name *La Vanguardia Española* describe him as the person "in [whom] the unity of Spain lives," the creator of peace in Spain and a teacher for the Spanish people.⁷⁵ Robert Paxton describes the leader and "the interaction between Leader and Nation" as essential ideological aspects of Fascism.⁷⁶ In the case of the discussion of Franco in *La Vanguardia Española*, authors create a paternalistic and authoritarian image of Franco as Spain's leader that evokes the models of Nazism and Italian Fascism. Editorial content in the paper dealing with Communism and anti-Communism often struck an openly militant tone.

La Vanguardia leaned heavily on these rhetorical tools to establish an ideological footing for both public expression of Francoist beliefs and for the authority of the system throughout the late-1930s and early-1940s. These strategies were applied more or less nationally, while other specific rhetorical strategies were applied to regional publications. This is especially true in the case of Catalonia and many of these strategies demonstrate the existence of a unique Catalan regional press even in the earliest months of Francoist rule. In an attempt to establish the ruling

⁷⁴ Ibid., 362.

⁷⁵ "¡Viva, en Franco, la unidad de España!," *La Vanguardia Española*, January 25, 1942, 1; Eugenio Montes, "Cataluña de ayer y hoy," *La Vanguardia Española*, January 25, 1942, 2.

⁷⁶ Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (New York: Random House, 2004), 9.

authority of Franco and his supporters, *La Vanguardia*'s January 27, 1939 edition attempts to place figures of Francoist authority in important public spaces within Catalan public consciousness. For example, the paper mentions that while the National Army "received hugs from the people, who could not believe what they were seeing," a group of Franco's soldiers entered into the Plaça de Catalunya.⁷⁷ Plaça de Catalunya is the historic, symbolic, and functional center of the Barcelona metropole. Positioned at the intersection of several important streets within Barcelona, the renowned architect Josep Puig i Cadafalch described its construction as a result of the lived influences of the public on city construction.⁷⁸ The significance of the Plaça de Catalunya in the popular mentality of Catalans in mid-20th century Barcelona would have been especially strong in the bourgeois neighborhoods that surrounded it, who were also typically more receptive to Catalanist ideology.⁷⁹

This strategy, to place figures of Francoist authority in places of Catalan public importance, is one that was not only repeatedly used in the Catalan press of early Francoism, but was one that demonstrates a unique dual function of Catalan periodicals under Franco's rule. It demonstrates that not only were publications meant to help bring citizens into the ideological fold of Franco's new state, but that in the special case of Catalonia, these publications attempted to bridge the gap between what Francesc Vilanova calls the "radically repressive central apparatus" of the new state and the special local identity felt by many inhabitants of Catalonia.⁸⁰ This use of public spaces, especially in Barcelona, was not unique to this case in *La Vanguardia* and will be emphasized again in discussion of additional publications.

⁷⁷ "Entrada apoteósica del Ejército Nacional en Barcelona," *La Vanguardia*, January 27, 1939, 2.

⁷⁸ Josep Puig i Cadafalch, *La Plaça de Catalunya* (Barcelona: Llibreria Catalònia, 1927), 11.

⁷⁹ Eduardo Aibar Puentes, "Urbanismo y estudios sociohistoricos de la tecnología: El caso del Ensanche de Barcelona," *Llull* 18 (1995), 12; Marfany, *Nacionalisme espanyol i catalanitat*, 225.

⁸⁰ Vilanova, *Franquisme i cultura*, 326.

Destino: Política de Unidad: A Weekly Publication and the Role of Writers-

Destino: Política de Unidad was a weekly publication that began publishing in 1937.

Unlike the rest of the publications studied in this paper, it was not founded in Catalonia. Instead, it was founded in the Castilian city of Burgos, the de facto capital of Franco's Spain during the Civil War, by right-wing Catalan writers who found themselves outside of Catalonia when the war broke out.⁸¹ *Destino*, as it was colloquially known, focused on largely cultural and social commentary and published continuously from 1937 until it ceased publishing in 1980 after the giant of late-20th century Catalan politics Jordi Pujol failed to transition it into a successful publication after the death of Franco and Spain's transition to democracy.⁸² *Destino* was created with a dual set of missions which provided it a unique position within the Francoist system. First, during the first years of the regime, *Destino* became a publication that was especially well-aligned with the political goals of Francoism.⁸³ Second, as a publication headed by a group of Catalan writers who sided with Franco and against the majority of the population of Catalonia during the Civil War, *Destino* represents the continuity of expression of Catalan writers from the Republican period into the Francoist period. This position made *Destino* a magazine with the position, and desire, to create a new Francoist culture in the region which could resonate with Catalans of a conservative or even nationalist political background.⁸⁴ This paper's analysis of

⁸¹ Pilar Cabellos i Mínguez and Eulàlia Pérez i Vallverdú, "*Destino: Política de Unidad*. Tres aspectes de l'inici d'una transformació obligada," *Els Marges* 37 (1987), 22.

⁸² Didier Corderot, "La revista *Destino* (1937-1939) y la cuestión de la catalanidad," in *Centros y periferias: Prensa, impresos y territorios en el mundo contemporáneo*, eds. Nathalie Ludec and Françoise Dubosquet Lairys (Paris: Presse, Imprimés, Lecture dans l'Aire Romane (PILAR), 2004), 218.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 207.

⁸⁴ Cabellos i Mínguez and Pérez i Vallverdú, "*Destino. Política de Unidad*. (1936-1939). Tres aspectes de l'inici d'una transformació obligada," 20, 22.

Destino during the late-1930s and early-1940s will focus on the special position of its writers within the Francoist press environment and their attempts to bridge Catalan identity and Francoism.

In examining the writers and editors employed by *Destino* during its first years of existence, it becomes clear that the publication was willing to provide a platform for writers of a variety of backgrounds, ranging from center-right to right-wing. For example, Ignasi Agustí, one of *Destino*'s founders and its eventual director, was a member of the center-right Catalan nationalist party *Lliga Regionalista* before the war.⁸⁵ The party held Franco's movement at arm's length and did not even officially support him once the war broke out.⁸⁶ On the other hand, another *Destino* founder, Santiago Nadal, held such radically right-wing convictions that the combination of Catalonia's labor movement and its nationalist sectors advocating for separation from Spain caused him to flee first to Fascist Italy and then ultimately to the sectors of Spain controlled by Franco during the Civil War.⁸⁷ This ideological diversity within *Destino*'s staff of writers can be attributed to a certain extent to the broad conservative coalition that Franco assembled.

However, the specific inclusion of conservative Catalan nationalists like Agustí demonstrates a unique ideological aspect of the Francoist system in Catalonia. During the early-20th century, Catalonia had been what Stanley Payne called the "leading center of nationalism in Spain, whether Catalan or Spanish."⁸⁸ These two nationalisms coalesced into different corners of right-wing politics in Catalonia and a coalition such as Franco's had to deal with these

⁸⁵ Gran enciclopèdia catalana, "Ignasi Agustí i PeyPOCH," *Gran enciclopèdia catalana*, accessed March 1, 2021. <https://www.enciclopedia.cat/ec-gec-0001216.xml#>.

⁸⁶ Josep R. Llobera, *Foundations of National Identity: From Catalonia to Europe* (New York: Berghahn, 2004), 34.

⁸⁷ Vilanova, *Franquisme i cultura*, 61.

⁸⁸ Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 15.

divisions. Agustí's presence in *Destino*'s editorials demonstrates that when push came to shove within the Francoist press and governing coalition, right-wing politics came before positions on the unity of Spain and issues related to its national minorities.

The presence of such varying ideologies on *Destino*'s staff came through in its written content relating to *unidad*. First, this is clear in *Destino*'s name. Its full name, *Destino: Política de Unidad*, translates as "Destiny: Policy [or politics] of Unity." On one hand, this name carries echoes of the desires for national unity, especially under a leader or party, that was so typical of European right-wing leaders of the 1930s.⁸⁹ However, when viewed through another lens, "unity" can also be interpreted as a call to oppose separatism and any move towards the establishment of an independent Catalonia.⁹⁰ "Unity" as a concept features heavily throughout the written content of *Destino*. For example, the heading of *Destino*'s feature article on January 31, 1942 that discussed Franco's first visit to Catalonia was headed with the word "Unity."⁹¹ The article contains multiple lines explicitly calling out to the issue of maintaining Catalonia's unity with Spain, such as the reference to Franco "stepping on the Spanish land of Catalonia."⁹² Just a week later, a similar article, titled "United Spain" would head the February 7 edition of *Destino*. In this article rhetoric fueled by the chauvinism of Spanish nationalism waxed poetic about the "memory of His Excellency the Chief of State's [Franco] trip through Catalonia's

⁸⁹ Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, 41.

⁹⁰ Despite its more recent associations with the post-Franco Catalan nationalist movement, separatism was indeed a serious political proposition in Catalonia in the 1930s. In fact, Catalonia temporarily declared its independence in 1931 before the leaders of the Spanish Republic negotiated its return to Spain with the promise of more autonomy. See "Proclamación de República en Barcelona," *La Vanguardia*, April 15, 1931, 1.

⁹¹ Romano, "La Unidad," *Destino: Política de Unidad*, January 31, 1942, 1.

⁹² Ibid.

lands” that still “filled the air of Spain.”⁹³ It also brags of how Catalonia had been “reintegrated into the homeland in a heartbeat by the troops of Franco.”⁹⁴

This type of chauvinism that celebrated Franco’s conquest of Catalonia and promoted Spanish nationalism was one clear side of *Destino*’s published content. However, in many of the very same editions where this type of rhetoric, there was also content appeared that attempted to connect Francoism with a conservative audience of a Catalanist background. One of the best examples of this comes from the January 31, 1942 publication. The caption of the picture on the cover of the edition explains that it is a photo of Franco visiting the monastery at Montserrat, where he is viewing a statue of Santa Maria de Montserrat, the Patron Saint of Catalonia.⁹⁵ Montserrat and Santa Maria have both operated historically as symbols of Catalonia. Specifically, since the late-1800s Montserrat had served for a symbol of a Catholic version of Catalanism that came from a more conservative background.⁹⁶ Placing Franco on the cover of a Catalan cultural and social magazine in the monastery of Montserrat was a type of double speak for a Catalan audience. On one hand, the image of Franco at a monastery fit perfectly with the rhetorical expectations of a regime that preached worship of its leader and held Catholicism as one of its foundational values. On the other, a nationalistic and conservative Catalan could see this image as a Spanish leader paying homage to a traditional and powerful symbol of Catalonia and its cultural identity.

Destino and the content it published demonstrate a fact that runs against the typical interpretation of the evolution of the Francoist regime. The emergence of an early version of

⁹³ “España Unida,” *Destino: Política de Unidad*, February 7, 1942, 1.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Romano, “La Unidad,” 1.

⁹⁶ Josep Maria Garcia Fuentes, “Víctor Balaguer, Montserrat i Catalunya,” *Cercles: Revista d’Història Cultural* 19 (2016), 344.

pluralistic power sharing between interest groups and different sections of Franco's coalition is typically interpreted as a development limited to the neo-Fascist Falangists and the ultra-conservative Catholic movement of Carlism until the 1950s when the regime began to open up to more technocratic influence from the Catholic Church.⁹⁷ *Destino* demonstrates that, at the very least, in a small magazine in the periphery of Francoist society, a broader form of ideological pluralism could exist even on a topic as controversial as Catalan nationalism. In this way, *Destino* carries contradictory messages regarding the state of the Francoist press in the late-1930s and early-1940s. Some of *Destino*'s writers coming from political backgrounds that did not strictly fit under Franco's ideological umbrella also demonstrates the regime's necessary reliance on a wider staff of writers and editors than just what the Falangist party cadre could produce. It demonstrates that limited ideological pluralism could exist while the regime's most oppressive and authoritarian rhetoric continued to be employed by some of its most radical defenders.

El Pirineo: Local Journalism and a View from the Provinces-

El Pirineo was founded as a completely new daily newspaper in the province of Girona upon the Francoist takeover. Girona is the northeastern most province of Catalonia and runs most of the region's border with France. Like much of Catalonia outside of Barcelona, it is a primarily rural area. *El Pirineo* was founded at the insistence of Girona's new Francoist governor and, like *Destino*, included writers of both a background of extreme right-wing

⁹⁷ Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 363.

ideology as well as of a more traditional Catalanist conservatism.⁹⁸ The first five cover articles published by *El Pirineo* demonstrate a mix of Fascist, Catholic, and anti-separatist sentiments that marked the content of *La Vanguardia Española* and *Destino* during the first years of Franco's regime. The headlines of these five articles read, "Our Proposition," "The Voice of the Pope," "Holy Unity," "The New Infancy," and "Fiftieth Birthday of Hitler."⁹⁹ These headlines provide examples of the type of local journalism that residents of Girona were regularly presented with on their front pages. It demonstrates that the valuable front page of *El Pirineo* was regularly reserved to deliver some of the regime's most hardline ideological messages to its readers.

Some of these articles betray an obvious ideological viewpoint, however others require more analysis. The first of these cover articles, "Our Proposition," was the editorial staff's explanation of their goals for *El Pirineo*. This article was partially commentary as well as partially an introduction to the paper's existence, thus it is the most rhetorically moderated of the five that will be examined. The writer promised the "submission" of their work to Franco's mission, who they declared had been "[sent] by God to reign in our homeland... and to save it."¹⁰⁰ While this article did not contain many of the ideological and rhetorical tropes that were common throughout other papers of the era and of the other articles of *El Pirineo* which are to come, it serves as an important example of exultation of Franco in the Fascist model of the leader.

⁹⁸ Ajuntament de Girona, "Publicació: El Pirineo," *Ajuntament de Girona*, accessed March 3, 2021. <https://pandora.girona.cat/details.vm?q=id:0000282003&lang=ca&view=hemeroteca>.

⁹⁹ "Nuestro propósito," *El Pirineo*, April 17, 1939, 1; "La voz del Papa," *El Pirineo*, April 18, 1939, 1; "La santa unidad," *El Pirineo*, April 19, 1939, 1; "La nueva infancia," *El Pirineo*, April 20, 1939; "Los 50 años de Hitler," *El Pirineo*, April 21, 1939, 1.

¹⁰⁰ "Nuestro propósito," 1.

The second article, “The Voice of the Pope,” discusses a message that Pope Pius XII had recently given in support of the “great service to Christianity provided by the warriors under the orders of Franco.”¹⁰¹ The article defends the Nationalist uprising that began the Spanish Civil War by arguing that since it happened, “it has been affirmed that the main objective of the struggle was the defense of Catholicism.”¹⁰² The article argued that such statements from the Pope should be a source of great pride for the Spanish people and ends with a striking metaphor comparing those who fell in the Civil War to Jesus by saying that both “offered themselves as victims in order to save the world.”¹⁰³ Statements such as these provide evidence of the strong influence that political rhetoric in the name of Catholicism had on the regime as early as 1939. While few would debate the influence of Catholicism on Francoist ideology, it is typically an influence on the regime that highlighted after the decline of Fascism. This article of *El Pirineo* demonstrates that such rhetoric was not just present but highlighted in a digestible editorial vignette during the regime’s earliest days.

The next article, “Holy Unity,” directly addresses the history of cultural divides within Spain and exalts Spanish historical figures who had a role in bringing about what *El Pirineo*’s writers recognize as a unified Spain.¹⁰⁴ Interestingly, the article actually makes reference to the Act of Unification that created the FET y de las JONS, the official Francoist ruling party, out of the different wings of Franco’s wartime alliance. In doing so, the article invokes this act as a part of a larger Spanish national historical tendency towards “unity.” Specifically, the article cites this as a nature of Spain’s history going back to the time of Fernando and Isabela, the 15th-

¹⁰¹ “La voz del Papa,” 1.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ “La santa unidad,” 1.

and 16th-century monarchs of Aragon and Castille who married and in doing so created “Spain” as a single functional geopolitical entity for the first time in history.¹⁰⁵ It calls on readers to “every day carry out the practice of Holy Unity that, imposed by Spain and decreed by the Caudillo [Franco] shall be the route by which we will arrive... to the highest destinies.”¹⁰⁶ In this article, the author portrayed the unity of Spain as something which carried lived values and that required the action of Spaniards to realize. Such rhetoric demonstrates the opposing view to Catalanism, a view of a supreme centralized and unified version of Spain that rejects regional idiosyncrasy in exchange for national uniformity.

The fourth and fifth articles demonstrate a type of openly Fascistic rhetoric typical only of this era. First, the fourth article, “The New Infancy,” leans into rhetoric of national rebirth that was typical of European Fascism. Many of the philosophical views of Fascism celebrated a rebirth of a purer version of the national community, especially one that left a weaker or troubled version behind, thanks to the action of the people¹⁰⁷ This article implores readers to act on the opportunity to seize on the future provided by the Spain of the “New State” and the new values of class unity, discipline, “Christian brotherhood,” and social cohesion.¹⁰⁸ It celebrates the disappearance of the Spain of the past, which the article considers defined by “Marxist hate and denial of God.”¹⁰⁹ Much of this rhetoric of rebirth and a new future fits neatly under Robert Griffin’s definition of Fascism as a form of “palingenetic ultranationalism.”¹¹⁰ The fifth article, “Fiftieth Birthday of Hitler,” continues with a more Fascistic rhetoric for obvious reasons. It celebrates Hitler’s fiftieth birthday by sharing propagandistic portrayals of Hitler’s domestic

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, 16.

¹⁰⁸ “La nueva infancia,” 1.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ For this definition, see Robert Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (London: Palgrave, 2000).

popularity, the non-tyrannical relationship that Hitler had with his people, and the natural admiration they felt for him.¹¹¹ The author calls attention to the “magnificent understanding between the German people and [Franco]” and calls for a “magnificent gesture of solidarity” that Nazi Germany offered in supporting Franco’s forces in the Spanish Civil War.¹¹²

This admiration of Nazism and the Fascistic view of the Spanish nation presented in “The New Infancy” may be what some associate with the earliest years of Francoist rule. However, as this sample of *El Pirineo* headlines demonstrates, this type of content did not make up the entirety of the Francoist press messaging. *El Pirineo* provides an example of a publication with a specific, local audience in mind and the type of rhetoric with which those readers were inundated. All of these front-page articles were editorial pieces and it is also worthwhile to consider that *El Pirineo*, like the other publications previously discussed in this chapter, frequently featured political editorial content on their front pages. This publication structure changed sharply after World War II, which will be further discussed in chapter 4.

Conclusions

Discussion of *La Vanguardia Española*, *Destino*, and *El Pirineo* serves several purposes for this paper. First, it helps set a benchmark for what published content under Francoist censorship looked like during the earliest years of the regime and those which are traditionally considered to be when Franco’s state was most radical and Fascistic.¹¹³ From 1938-1942, the period of so-called “Defascistization” had not yet occurred.¹¹⁴ Much of chapter 4 will be

¹¹¹ “Los 50 años de Hitler,” 1.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Marín i Corbera, “Fascismo en España,” 656.

¹¹⁴ Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 401.

dedicated to analyzing the extent to which change came to the content that Francoist newspapers and magazines published after World War II and the fall of the Axis Powers. In order to evaluate any such change, a benchmark of published content is necessary. As this chapter demonstrates, publications during this era published content meant to glorify Franco as a leader in the mold of Fascists around Europe, exult the power of the Catholic Church and of Catholicism in Spanish society, and support a vision of a unified Spanish nation that rejected separatism. Additionally, discussion regarding the presence of Catalan identity and political Catalanism in the content of particular papers demonstrates what the limits of the Francoist censorship system were, even during the era when censorship law could be applied to the fullest extent. This analysis, specifically relating to *Destino*, demonstrates that even before any semblance of “liberalization” had taken place in Franco’s system, the limits of the popularity of Franco’s movement and its reliance on conservative figures who had previously existed outside of it allowed a broader range of ideological expression in the press. This was true even if that broader range of ideologies could only be expressed covertly or through a certain type of double speak that still produced rhetoric that Francoist censors would deem acceptable.

Chapter 4: From One Order to Another: Transitioning to the 'NATO Era'

Just as developments in press content closely mirrored developments in international affairs during the period of Fascist empowerment in European affairs from roughly 1938 to 1942, so too did it during the final years of World War II and the first decade of postwar life when Fascist power crumbled and ultimately disappeared. These changing tides of international power posed a unique challenge for Francoist Spain. German planes had been used to transport Spanish soldiers from Morocco to the Iberian Peninsula to begin the uprising that ultimately ended in Franco assuming power over Spain.¹¹⁵ Italian soldiers had fought alongside Franco's troops against the Spanish Republic as well.¹¹⁶ These facts, combined with Franco's diplomatic coziness with Hitler and Mussolini until approximately 1942, made Spain a country which many other nations perceived as a de facto ally of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.¹¹⁷ With the fall of Mussolini and Hitler, Franco's Spain found itself in the uncomfortable position of having bet on the losing side of the bloodiest conflict in human history.

With this challenge in mind, the principal objective of Francoist foreign policy from the mid-1940s through much of the 1950s was creating a rapprochement to the new dominant powers of Western Europe, principally the United States, Great Britain, and France. In the words of Stanley Payne, the rising power of these liberal democracies in Western Europe made it so that Spain had to "totally [discard]" the image of Fascism and find a new ideological

¹¹⁵ Beevor, *The Battle for Spain*, 64.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 373.

¹¹⁷ Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 398.

identity.¹¹⁸ The foundation for this transformation was laid in 1942 as the outcome of World War II began to seem more in doubt, however the regime's attempts to change its ideological appearance began in earnest in 1943. Franco ceased giving pro-Axis speeches in public in 1942, established the first semblance of a parliament to exist under his regime, and ended Spain's policy of passively pro-Axis "non-belligerence" in World War II to adopt an official stance of "neutrality" in 1943.¹¹⁹ These kinds of signals were meant to suggest increased distance between Spain and the Axis Powers and the liberalization of Spanish governing institutions to onlooking nations. In this way, changes within Francoist domestic policy were made with an understanding of the skepticism the Allies viewed Spain with just as they seemed poised to mount a counter to the Axis Powers and possibly ultimately defeat them. Such changes continued throughout the mid- to late-1940s. Most notably, in 1945 the *Fuero de los Españoles* (Charter of the Spaniards), which enumerated a limited set of nominal rights to all of Franco's citizens, was enacted.¹²⁰ Additionally, in 1947 the Spanish monarchy was restored, which was a victory for more moderate conservative monarchists over the anti-monarchy Falangists.¹²¹

In replacing the influence of Fascism on Francoist state ideology, two ideas came to the forefront and would dominate much of official state discourse not only during the 1940s, but for much of the remainder of Franco's rule. These were anti-Communism and "National Catholicism." Anti-Communism came naturally to Francoist leaders as the Soviet Union had been the principal supplier of arms and war materials to the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War.¹²² Francoist propaganda framed the uprising against the Republican government and

¹¹⁸ Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 401.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 375, 389, 394.

¹²⁰ Fusi, García Delgado, Juliá, Malefakis, and Payne, *Franquismo*, 252.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Beevor, *The Battle for Spain*, 152, 154.

Franco's subsequent victory in the Civil War as a "crusade" against Communism.¹²³ When relations between the western Allies and the USSR began to fray in at the end of World War II and the Cold War began to emerge, Francoist leaders saw it as beneficial to play up their past hostility to Communists in their own country to present themselves as natural allies in the struggle against Communism.

National Catholicism, as the name implies, served to attempt to tie the essence of the Spanish nation to Catholic belief and the Vatican. The ideology traced back the history of the Spanish nation to a supposed founding moment in the unification of the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon with the marriage of their monarchs, Isabel and Fernando in the late-15th century.¹²⁴ Isabel and Fernando together completed the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula's Muslim kingdoms, a fact which caused the Vatican to bestow upon them the nickname of the *Reyes Católicos* (literally translated as "Catholic Kings," however the term more accurately means "Catholic Monarchs").¹²⁵ During a time of international isolation, the Francoist state hoped that Catholicism would be a tool to help connect Spain with a new set of potential allies and make the country palatable to other countries of Europe. In 1946, even the Vatican itself refused to sign a Concordat with Francoist Spain.¹²⁶ Such a rejection illustrates the full scope of the challenging diplomatic isolation that Spain was faced with after the end of World War II and the country's dire need to find a new ideological north star to allow it to be accepted into the new international liberal democratic order being led by NATO.

¹²³ Alfonso Pérez-Agote, "Sociología histórica del Nacional-catolicismo español," *Historia Contemporánea* 26 (2003), 207.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 208.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 208.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 224.

As such new ideological concerns swept into Spain, so too did changes to both the content and structure of the Francoist press. However, the extent of these changes and the impact that they had on the content that readers in Catalonia engaged with varied. As this chapter will demonstrate, the new ideological emphasis on anti-Communism and National Catholicism in the late-1940s and early-1950s did not produce new types of periodical content when compared to late-1930s, but simply increased the frequency with which that type of content appeared. It will also demonstrate that, as Spain's economy began to liberalize and a true consumer culture began to emerge, many Catalan periodicals underwent a radical physical transformation. Meanwhile, despite these changes, many of the staff that had headed Francoist publications during the regime's most radical years remained at the helm of these periodicals that were meant to present a moderated face to onlookers.

Finally, this chapter will continue to keep a focus on the exceptionality of Catalonia within the Francoist press. As Franco's regime began to embrace ideas of limited change, Catalanist conservatives found new ways to express their regional identity. These included seizing on the opportunity for limited publication in Catalan and the return of certain regional customs to the pages of the region's publications. This chapter will again lean on publications from Barcelona as well as Catalonia's other provinces to examine how much the press truly changed during the first period of post-World War II Francoist rule and how the region's periodical content transformed in the lead-up to Spain's acceptance as a sufficiently reformed partner of the European and North American liberal democracies.

Los Sitios de Gerona: The Limits of Reform and the New Postwar Francoist Ideology in Action-

Los Sitios de Gerona was the immediate successor publication to Girona's *El Pirineo*. The latter closed its doors in 1943, the same year that the former began to publish.¹²⁷ It was unique within the Catalan periodical sphere because not only was it an official party newspaper of the FET y de las JONS, but it was also managed directly from Madrid rather than in the city or province of Girona.¹²⁸ As a party newspaper, *Los Sitios* offers a strong context to analyze the new important ideological aspects of Francoism, such as anti-Communism and National Catholicism in a case where earlier unrelated ideological tropes of Francoism remained largely excluded.

First, *Los Sitios* features numerous editions that prominently position anti-Communist rhetoric within their published content. For example, the publication's June 1, 1948 edition features coverage of Czechoslovak elections under the heading "The Communist Farse."¹²⁹ In covering ex-Vice President Henry Wallace's decision to run for President of the United States, the paper's January 1, 1948 edition chose to highlight a report that he "hopes the Communists vote for him."¹³⁰ Another edition shared news that the USSR had opened up select regions to tourists, while being sure to include and extensively detail the surveillance that visitors would be under.¹³¹ While observations such as the Soviet influence over Czechoslovak elections in 1948, possible Communist influence over Henry Wallace, and surveillance on foreign tourists in the USSR may not have been necessarily false, such coverage reveals the point of view Francoist

¹²⁷ Premsa digitalitzada, "Los Sitios de Gerona," *Ajuntament de Girona*, accessed April 1, 2021. <https://pandora.girona.cat/details.vm?q=id:0000661301&lang=ca&view=hemeroteca>.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ "Gottwald gana las elecciones checas," *Los Sitios de Gerona*, June 1, 1948, 1.

¹³⁰ "Wallace candidato," *Los Sitios de Gerona*, January 1, 1948, 1.

¹³¹ "Rusia permitirá la entrada a turistas extranjeros," *Los Sitios de Gerona*, March 17, 1951, 2.

authorities wanted Communists to be covered from. Coverage was fearful, and in many cases conspiratorial, in a way that bore resemblance to a red scare mentality. However, this type of writing was also typical of what could be found in Catalonia's Francoist periodicals since even during the Spanish Civil War. In this way, anti-Communism was not truly a new aspect of Francoist ideology even if Spanish leaders began to play it up to try to reach out to NATO leaders.

Similarly, *Los Sitios* frequently featured either evangelizing religious content supporting the beliefs of the Catholic Church or advocating for the interests of Christians in interfaith conflicts. One of the examples of this ideological outlook which most clearly demonstrates its power in the types of opinions presented in Francoist periodicals comes once again from the June 1, 1948 edition of *Los Sitios*. In this edition, the newspaper's writers injected National Catholic thought into the Israel-Palestine conflict. This is clearest in the article "The Arab Armies Advance and Will Begin the Siege of Tel-Aviv." Here, after a short summary of the facts of the conflict, the author then proceeded to dedicate half of the article to discussing the destruction of churches by Israeli forces.¹³² This special focus on the apparently accidental shelling of two churches in Israel may seem like a very strange singular detail to highlight out of an entire conflict, especially when a siege of the Israeli capital seemed possible.¹³³ However, the idea of National Catholicism dictated that these details must have been important to Spaniards given that the ideology defined the Spanish nation according to its relationship with Christianity and Catholicism. Such a supposed importance of Catholicism to the people of Spain and Catalonia meant that *Los Sitios* never missed an opportunity to report on any type of development relating

¹³² "Los Ejércitos árabes avanzan y van a comenzar el cerco de Tel-Aviv," *Los Sitios de Gerona*, June 1, 1948, 1.

¹³³ Ibid.

to the Catholic Church. This was especially true for happenings in Catalonia. For example, one edition of *Los Sitios* dedicated nearly an entire page to covering homages to Pope Pius XII performed by local labor groups in Figueres and Banyoles.¹³⁴

Los Sitios de Gerona was an example a publication which stuck very closely to the new ideological zeitgeist of Francoism. It stayed clear of topics relating to Fascism and World War II and rarely touched more radical ideas that Falangists were empowered to share during the late-1930s especially. However, despite these ideological evolutions, *Los Sitios* maintained the symbol of the Falangists, the yoke and arrows, in the top corner of its front page. While Falangist symbolism was being stripped from many other parts of Franco's state, the presence of the yoke and arrows here seems like an anachronism of another era.¹³⁵ In reality, this quirk demonstrates the slow and uneven processes of change that the Francoist press underwent. The following section will return to *Destino: Política de Unidad* and consider it as a publication with a much more mixed record of change.

Destino: Política de Unidad, Post-Fascist Revisionism, and Catalan in the Public Sphere-

The previous chapter focused on *Destino's* attempts to connect Francoist governing ideology with a Catalan audience. These attempts sometimes included connecting locations or symbols that were culturally significant for Catalans with Franco or symbols of the regime. In shifting to the publication's history throughout the late-1940s and early-1950s, this section will serve a dual purpose. First, through analysis of how *Destino* treated topics surrounding Fascism,

¹³⁴ "Los Sindicatos locales tributaron su homenaje al Papa Pío XII," *Los Sitios de Gerona*, March 15, 1951, 6; "El homenaje de la Organización Sindical a S.S. el Papa Pío XII," *Los Sitios de Gerona*, March 15, 1951, 6.

¹³⁵ Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 394-95.

it will serve as an example to examine the degree to which right-wing ideology truly had transformed. As *Los Sitios de Gerona* demonstrated, certain publications contained new ways of expressing traditional Francoist ideas. However, were the more radical and Fascistic elements of the press during the 1930s and early-1940s still welcome? The presence of such elements would suggest that the transformation of Francoism was shallow even in public periodical content.

Second, this section will include analysis of continued Catalanist symbolism and the new inclusion of the Catalan language in select elements of the publication. This will once again take a cultural angle to question the nature of Francoist ideological pluralism in Catalonia during this supposed liberalization. An increased acceptance of Catalan cultural symbolism would suggest a growth in such pluralism and a continuing liberalization of the cultural press.

For a system attempting to present a reformed face to potential allies, one may expect that treading carefully around topics of Fascism and major figures within Fascist systems would have been an important feature of post-World War II Spanish publications. However, in the case of *Destino*, the reality was far from that expectation. Rather than critiquing Fascist figures and praising Allied leaders when discussing World War II, *Destino*'s editorial writers commonly engaged in types of pro-Fascist revisionist analysis of the war and of the parties involved. Such analysis was most commonly found when discussing either postwar France or analyzing the defeat of Fascist Italy, both of which were frequent topics for *Destino*'s writers. *Destino*'s April 22, 1950 edition, published a full five years after the end of World War II, contains multiple pieces with Fascistic undertones in its "The World and Politics" section. First, the article "The Pétain Case" can only be described as a defense of the governing record of Vichy French leader Phillipe Pétain. The author, who went by the penname Romano and had been publishing since *Destino*'s earliest days, wrote this article in the response to a domestic uproar in France over an

article written in the French publication *Carrefour* that defended Pétain and his memory.¹³⁶

Pétain's government is most commonly associated with collaboration with the Nazis in World War II and signing the armistice that brought Germany victory over France in 1940. In his article, Romano laments the continued imprisonment of Marshal Pétain, saying that it was unjust to keep a 95-year-old man in prison.¹³⁷ However, Romano's complaints go beyond concern with Pétain's age and supposed fragility. He explicitly calls for what he refers to as a "revision" of how French citizens think about Pétain and his significance in ruling the Vichy State.¹³⁸

Interestingly, Romano focuses his ire relating to the treatment of Pétain on a central NATO leader, Charles De Gaulle. He writes that De Gaulle was engaging in an erroneous process of designating "good and bad Frenchmen," a process which Romano claims has resulted in De Gaulle and French Communists being declared the former while Pétain was designated the latter. To Romano, considering Pétain a villain while not condemning French Communists was a grand injustice. Romano goes on to be as explicit about the supposed injustice of Pétain's treatment as to write that, "without question, the government of Marshal Pétain committed errors, but the armistice approved by [its] legislators saved many lives and prevented major destruction."¹³⁹

A similarly revisionist article was published in *Destino*'s December 17, 1955 edition. This article, published only three days after Spain's official entry into the United Nations, was titled "Mussolini was not Responsible for the Execution of Ciano."¹⁴⁰ The article details newly discovered documents which supposedly demonstrate that the execution of Count Galeazzo

¹³⁶ Romano, "El caso Pétain," *Destino: Política de Unidad*, April 22, 1950, 10.

¹³⁷ Romano, "El caso Pétain," 10.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ "Mussolini no fue responsable del fusilamiento de Ciano", *Destino: Política de Unidad*, December 17, 1955, 27.

Ciano, a leading authority of the Italian Fascist state and son-in-law of Mussolini himself, was not at the direction of Mussolini. Not only is this not true, Mussolini did in fact order Ciano's execution under German pressure, but the article then bizarrely continues to claim that Mussolini was now "free of the largest crime for which international opinion had rebuked him."¹⁴¹ Beyond the suggestion that Mussolini's largest international crime was the execution of one of his ministers, the fact that this information was published at all demonstrates a habitual reflex of *Destino's* editorial staff to attempt to rehabilitate the image of Fascist leaders, especially those in who had ruled in Southern Europe.

One notable group who did not receive such attempts at character rehabilitation was the leadership of Nazi Germany itself. In the article about Count Ciano's death, the writer attempts to place the blame for his death directly at the feet of the German military. While limiting pro-Nazi rhetoric could be taken as an example of moderation and reform, especially after seeing the type of praise of Hitler that chapter 3 demonstrated appeared in publications like *El Pirineo*, the reality was more complex. Stanley Payne wrote that Italian Fascism specifically had "provided a sort of model for Franco's government."¹⁴² While Franco's government certainly accepted German help in the Civil War and had passively supported the Nazis during the early years of World War II, the genetic relationship of Francoism was much closer to Italian Fascism than it was to Nazism. Thus, articles attempting to rehabilitate Mussolini's image at the cost of Nazi Germany's could be taken as an attempt to sanitize the roots of Franco's government to outside observers rather than provide a true rejection of either Fascism or Nazism.

¹⁴¹ Massimo Donini and Francesco Diamanti, "Il Processo di Verona," *Materiali per una storia della cultura giuridica* 2 (2020), 468; "Mussolini no fue culpable del fusilamiento de Ciano," *Destino: Política de Unidad*, December 17, 1955, 27.

¹⁴² Payne, *Fascism in Spain*, 391.

This type of overt revisionism of the regimes of Pétain and Mussolini betrays a reality that publication reform was not a mandatory nor across the board process. It is worth noting that Romano's article on Pétain appeared on the tenth page of a 24-page edition of *Destino* and "Mussolini was not Responsible for the Execution of Ciano" appeared on the 27th page of a 48-page edition. Many of the publication's most ideological pieces did appear as cover stories in the 1930s and early-1940s. This suggests that, while such content was still permissible for publication, it may have been pushed towards the back pages. As *Destino* demonstrates, editorial content was not only free to continue discussing Fascism in a positive light, but in certain instances Catalan writers served as active advocates for revising the memory of past dictators.

However, such ideological continuity was not the only feature of Catalonia's Francoist journalism during the late-1940s and 1950s. *Destino* also contains certain features which demonstrated dramatic change and apparent liberalization in a Catalan context. Specifically, by 1950, the Catalan language had appeared in a limited capacity in the pages of *Destino*. Returning to the April 22, 1950 edition of the magazine, a number of advertisements were published either entirely in Catalan or in a mix of Catalan and Castilian Spanish. For example, Casa del Libro, a bookstore in Barcelona, had posted an advertisement listing new books they had on sale.¹⁴³ The titles of these books appeared in Catalan, while their descriptions were in Spanish. Additionally, a promotion for the celebration of poetry on the Day of the Book, which is a holiday celebrated in Spain on April 22, was written entirely in Catalan. However, the content of this section was limited to the upper left corner of one page and only included small

¹⁴³ *Destino: Política de Unidad*, April 22, 1950, 11.

excerpts from several poems with no commentary or introduction.¹⁴⁴ There was also an advertisement for a Catalan-Valencian-Balearic dictionary written in Catalan included.¹⁴⁵

Certain general patterns emerge in analyzing the types of content that the press could feature in Catalan. Clearly, advertisements for literature were the most common way for Catalan to appear in *Destino*'s pages. However, the type of literature that was permissible was typically comprised of either religious or pre-modern philosophical texts. For example, one book advertisement posted by Casa del Libro was a book about the religious significance of the Abbey of Montserrat while another was the "Complete Works of Bernat Metge," a 14th- and 15th-century Catalan humanist.¹⁴⁶ Here, it seems that works that were permissible for publication in Catalan were either of a religious background or were so distant from modern Catalan social and intellectual life that they could not be perceived by most to carry any potential political message. It is also worth noting that Catalan nearly exclusively appeared in advertisements. This could suggest another step in the Francoist ideological hierarchy. Just as chapter 3 demonstrated that certain aspects of Catalan culture were permissible for the press to serve a right-wing agenda, so too could these ads suggest that Catalan was permissible as a tool to drive economic activity. While Catalan language books may not have been a major industry, Francoist Spain was still not in an economic position to discourage spending in 1950. However, the state of the Spanish economy, especially in Catalonia, was beginning to change. This will be discussed in the following section.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 13.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 14; Valencian is considered to be either a Catalan dialect or a closely related language spoken in the modern Community of Valencia while Balearic is a Catalan dialect spoken in the Balearic Islands.

¹⁴⁶ Patrimoni cultural, "Bernat Metge: Humanisme a la literatura catalana," *Generalitat de Catalunya*, accessed April 1, 2021, <http://patrimoni.gencat.cat/ca/coleccio/bernat-metge>.

Destino's clearest contribution to studying the evolution of the Francoist press during this time was demonstrating the uneven nature of change. On one hand, ideologically orthodox supporters of Franco's regime still found *Destino*'s pages as a welcome home for their commentary on Spanish society and international politics. What they wrote had, in many cases, not changed very much since the late-1930s, even as Spain had grown closer to many of the same countries that *Destino*'s authors criticized. However, on the other hand, *Destino* demonstrates that one of the most famous policies of Francoist cultural oppression, the banning of Spain's minority languages in public, had begun to soften. By 1950, Catalan had returned to some advertisements and certain books were available in the language. Interestingly, given that such linguistic oppression was only a feature of select regions of Spain, such as Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia, the softening of this policy could in fact create a deceptively liberalized view of the press in these regions when compared with primarily Spanish-speaking regions like Madrid or Andalusia where linguistic and cultural politics may not have been as controversial.

La Vanguardia Española: A Commercial Revolution-

As striking as the 1950s reappearance of Catalan in *Destino*'s pages is, it still may not be the most dramatic physical change that Catalonia's periodicals underwent in the late-1940s and 1950s. As the 1950s grew nearer, the "Years of Hunger," or *años de hambre* as they are known in Spain, had begun to subside. Nearly the first decade of Franco's rule had been characterized by deep and widespread poverty, constant rationing, and an economy destroyed by the Civil War

that struggled to attract foreign capital.¹⁴⁷ However, by the end of the 1940s, these conditions were beginning to soften. The conditions that would define the following decades of explosive economic growth in Spain had begun to lay their roots. This is especially true in Catalonia, where an ancestral bourgeois class and an early version of the tourism industry that would catapult the Spanish economy upward in the late-20th century already existed.¹⁴⁸ An improving economy brought with it a growing consumer base with a larger disposable income.

Thus, Catalan newspapers transformed to accommodate such consumers. Increasing Catalan consumer power and the presence of tourism were both reflected clearly in *La Vanguardia Española*. First, an increased interest in newspaper readers as consumers is reflected in the proliferation of advertisements. Second, the increase of tourists as a part of the ‘Catalan’ readership is reflected in the advertisements for shops across Catalonia that began appearing in German, French, and English. This section will analyze how these changes demonstrate a new change in Catalan periodicals while also demonstrating why periodical content was important to the act of portraying a reformed Spain to the outside world.

¹⁴⁷ Ángel del Arco Blanco, “Morir de hambre,” 243, 247.

¹⁴⁸ For an analysis of these conditions, see Sasha Pack, *Tourism and Dictatorship: Europe’s Peaceful Invasion of Franco’s Spain* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).



Figures 3 and 4: To left, example of a typical page of *La Vanguardia Española* in 1950.¹⁴⁹ To right, a page from 1940 with more advertisements than typical for the era.¹⁵⁰

The examples of pages of *La Vanguardia Española* shown in figures 3 and 4 succinctly demonstrate the types of dramatic changes that took place in terms of the commercial role of Catalan periodicals. The first and most apparent transformation was in the quantity of advertisements. Whereas the edition from 1940 had about a quarter of its page covered in advertisements, that increased to roughly half the page in 1950. This change is even more

¹⁴⁹ *La Vanguardia Española*, April 23, 1950, 7.

¹⁵⁰ *La Vanguardia Española*, April 23, 1940, 6.

dramatic in other pages from 1940 where there are even less ads. In 1950, there were also pages of *La Vanguardia Española* dedicated entirely to advertisements.

The second change is the appearance of the first foreign language advertisements in *La Vanguardia Española*. In this same April 23, 1950 edition of the paper, there were ads for ‘gift watches’ posted in Spanish, English, French, and German by a shop in Barcelona.¹⁵¹ These ads, clearly geared towards a foreign audience, imply a dramatic shift in the intended readership of Catalan newspapers. It suggests that the companies placing the ads, newspaper editors, and the censors that allowed the ads to be published, were all aware that there were foreign eyes that regularly fell on the region’s publications. Thus, while Francoist ideology had always made it clear why press content should mirror the ideological developments of the Spanish state, this information provides a practical reason for why the regime’s censors would have wanted periodicals to at least appear as reformed or moderated. In 1950, many nations that had heeded the request of the United Nations in 1946 and broke off diplomatic relations with Spain still had not reestablished them.¹⁵² Tourists who came to Spain around 1950 provided a valuable opportunity to communicate a new image of the country that those travelers could then carry home with them. The presence of advertisements meant especially for foreigners provides the direct link between changes meant to create a reformed image of the Catalan press and international political developments.

Generally, these examples of proliferating advertisement in *La Vanguardia Española* exposes a changing mission of the press in Catalonia when compared with the one enumerated by the Press Law of 1938. The Press Law conceived of the Spanish press as a tool meant to

¹⁵¹ *La Vanguardia Española*, April 23, 1950, 3.

¹⁵² For this UN recommendation, see UN General Assembly, *Relations of Members of the United Nations with Spain*, 12 December 1946, A/RES/39, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f08d8.html>.

connect the Spanish people with the ideas of their government.¹⁵³ Now, the press in Spain, and especially in Catalonia, had taken on a second expanded responsibility of connecting consumers with products. In a dictatorial state which had gone to great lengths to coordinate the operations of the press with the goals of the state, this increased function of periodicals as channels for commercial activity represented a substantial change.

Conclusions

Together, *Los Sitios de Gerona*, *Destino: Política de Unidad*, and *La Vanguardia Española* show how changes in Catalan publications began to diverge both ideologically and functionally. The growth of commercial advertisement in many publications began to reduce the amount of journalistic content included in newspapers, however the content that remained began to differ greatly between publications. Certain papers, like *Los Sitios de Gerona*, moderated their ideological statements and held closely to the ideological tents of Francoism that Spanish authorities had begun to favor. Others, like *Destino: Política de Unidad*, diverged more from the rhetoric that censorship law and state ideology suggest should have been present in the late-1940s and early-1950s. This divergence could occur in both occasional adherence to more radical ideas typical of Francoist periodicals of the 1930s and in apparent relaxation of press rules, such as the occasional appearance of the Catalan language. Together, these evolutions demonstrate the stagnation of reform in certain Catalan publications press and the surprising

¹⁵³ BOE 550, 24 April 1938, 6938.

presence of change in others. Together, these changes should demonstrate that reform of the press was, like many other aspects of the Francoist State, not uniform nor predictable.

Conclusion

Despite desire among historians to compartmentalize the evolution of the Francoist State around clear narratives of liberalization and change, the example of the Spanish press provides contrary evidence. The clearest observation regarding change within the Francoist press, especially in Catalonia, is that there were very few universal changes that spanned across all publications and that these changes are difficult to temporally compartmentalize. In certain cases, such as that of *Destino: Política de Unidad*, the more radically authoritarian face of Francoist ideology continued to show itself from the 1930s through the 1950s. Meanwhile, the periodical history of the province of Gerona demonstrates a more gradual evolution from Fascistic content in *El Pirineo* during the late-1930s and early-1940s to more ideologically “moderated” reporting in *Los Sitios de Gerona*. This evolution, or lack thereof, all took place while the Spanish economy began to recover from the decimation that took place in the Civil War and Catalan newspapers increasingly became hubs for commercial activity, as demonstrated in *La Vanguardia*. While particular changes were certainly not uniform across all Catalan publications of the Francoist era, the evolving function and purpose of periodicals in Catalan society was. Despite the narrow and politicized purpose of Spanish journalism described by the Press Law of 1938, Francoist journalism throughout the entirety of the regime’s first two decades of existence demonstrated that periodicals could exist with a variety of purposes, intended readerships, and even limited freedom in editorial views.

Meanwhile, Catalonia’s cultural situation was more complex than the harsh conditions of legal oppression under Francoism may suggest. During the first decade of Franco’s rule, some publications used symbols of Catalanism and Catalan identity as a tool to build consensus around Franco’s regime while also attempting to introduce the region to the ideology of the new state.

As Franco's regime consolidated, symbols of political Catalanism grew less common while less political manifestations of the region's culture and language began to appear more frequently. In this sense, while the overt expression of aspects of Catalan identity may have become easier, they tended to be depoliticized even when coming from a more conservative viewpoint.

These conclusions also contribute to the historiography of Francoism and of Spanish national identity by demonstrating the divergent experience of Spaniards of different regions under Franco's rule. While this paper addresses Francoist censorship as a national phenomenon, it also approaches periodicals from a regional view. In this sense, it suggests that there were different experiences with the press for different regions, even under the centralized rule of Francoism. With this in mind, further research may find value in designing a similar project in other Spanish regions. Specifically, the Basque Country, Galicia, and Spanish Morocco should be explored in this way because of the unique relationship between their local identities and the Spanish state. In the specific case of the Basque Country, the region's press may serve as an interesting object for future study because of the radicalization of Basque nationalism which occurred during Franco's rule, leading to the establishment of terrorist groups like ETA.¹⁵⁴

In 1953, the United States and Spain concluded the Pact of Madrid, a military alliance which allowed American bases on Spanish soil in exchange for direct American funding for the Spanish military.¹⁵⁵ Two years later, Spain was admitted as a full member of the United Nations. Through a combination of aesthetic and small systemic transformations, Francoist leaders attempted to sanitize their pasts and become acceptable allies for the powers of NATO. It worked. The Pact of Madrid and Spain's admission to the United Nations represented two large

¹⁵⁴ Rafael Leonisio Calvo, "Izquierda abertzale: De la heterogeneidad al monolitismo," *Coetánea* (2012): 377-378.

¹⁵⁵ Pablo León Aguinaga, "La historiografía española y las relaciones con los Estados Unidos de América: Las consecuencias del Pacto de Madrid y la Transición," *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea* 34 (2012): 360.

steps towards the normalization of Francoist Spain in the international sphere and were direct results of efforts by Spanish authorities to rebrand the image of the nation. Over the decades that followed, Spain would become a premier tourist destination for Europe and would grow further integrated into Western Europe, all while an aging Franco continued to reside over an authoritarian and nationalistic dictatorship with roots in Fascism.

The success of this campaign among Franco's contemporaries should not also obscure the history of his regime. The Francoist press weaponized culture and elevated the radical right, even into the more moderate years of the 1950s. This reality can and should coexist in the regime's historiography alongside factors such as a growing interest in Spain's economic success among Francoist leaders and a gradually expanding lenience towards the country's minority cultures.

The Spanish press system remained largely unchanged until 1966 when Minister of Culture Manuel Fraga finally convinced Franco's inner circle that the Press Law of 1938 was outdated and merited substantial liberalization.¹⁵⁶ It was then, in the final decade of Franco's life and a mere twelve years before the signing of the new Spanish constitution in 1978, that the press truly began to regain substantial freedom of expression. Until then, the long shadow of the oppressive instincts of 1930s Francoist governance continued to operate at the core of Francoist censorship, just as with many other aspects of the regime.

¹⁵⁶ Sinova, *La censura de prensa durante el franquismo*, 313.

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